

REMARKS / ARGUMENTS

These remarks are responsive to the Office Action dated January 29, 2007. Claims 1-8, 10, 12-18, 21, 23-27, 29, 30, 32, 34-45 are pending in the present application. Claims 1-33 are rejected. Claims 1 have been changed, claims 9, 11, 19, 20, 22, 28, 31, and 33 have been cancelled, and claims 34-45 have been added by this amendment.

A telephone interview was held with the Examiner on April 10, 2007, in which the 101 and 102 rejections and possible amendments for overcoming the rejections were discussed, the substance of which are incorporated into the amendments and remarks herein.

The amendments and new claims are supported by the specification. Claims 1, 12, and 23 have been amended to recite that the particular function is provided for a context of an application program, a user providing input within the context, as supported on page 5, lines 17-23 and page 6, lines 15-23, for example. The hot key is mapped to the particular function and the mapping is stored, where the storage of the mapping is clear from description throughout the specification; for example, at pages 8 and 9, it is described that another hot key, that has the same key combination as selected by the user, is deleted—for the hot key to be deleted, the mapping is deleted, and if the hot key mapping is to be deleted, that mapping must have been stored. The mapping and storing is performed without the user leaving the context, as described throughout the specification (e.g., page 6, lines 13-23). The mapping allows the particular function to be accessed by the computer system when the hot key is selected (e.g., page 7, lines 5-10, page 1, lines 1-2).

Claims 7, 17, and 29 recite selection of a function or mapping a hot key includes receiving input from the user indicating an item displayed in the context, the item causing the particular function to be accessed when the item is selected, as disclosed, for example, on page 9, lines 14-16. Hovering a pointer over the displayed feature as recited in claims 10, 21, and 32 is disclosed on page 8, lines 8-

12 and page 9, lines 14-16.

New claims 34, 38, and 42 recite mapping the hot key to the particular function without the user providing input to a menu separate from the context, which is supported in the specification on page 6, lines 15-23, and page 2, lines 9-13, for example. New claims 35, 39, and 43 recite receiving a selection of the particular function made by the user without the user providing input to a menu separate from the context, as described throughout the specification, e.g., page 6, lines 17-23, page 8, lines 7-13, and page 2, lines 9-13. Claims 36, 37, 40, 41, 44 and 45 recite indicating the item includes hovering a pointing device or selecting text, as disclosed on page 8, lines 7-13 and page 11, for example.

All changes are therefore fully supported by Applicant's specification.

101 Rejections

The Examiner rejected claims 12-22 under 35 U.S.C. 101, stating that the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. The Examiner stated that claim 12 is directed towards a "computer readable medium" which comprises a "computer readable signal" according to the specification, which is considered non-statutory. To expedite prosecution, Applicant has amended claim 12 to recite a "computer-readable storage medium storing program instructions", which is believed to be statutory. Applicant therefore requests that the rejection of claims 12-22 under 35 U.S.C. 101 be withdrawn.

The Examiner rejected claims 23-33 under 35 U.S.C. 101, stating that the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. The Examiner stated that claim 23 does not recite any enabling hardware. To expedite prosecution, Applicant has amended claim 23 to recite "a hardware

mechanism” in the first element, which is believed to be statutory. Applicant therefore requests that the rejection of claims 23-33 under 35 U.S.C. 101 be withdrawn.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-33 under 35 U.S.C. 101, stating that the claimed invention lacks patentable utility. The Examiner stated that claims 1, 12, 23 recite steps that do not produce a useful, concrete, and tangible result. To expedite prosecution, Applicant has amended claims 1, 12, and 23 to recite “mapping the hot key to the particular function and storing the mapping,” which is believed to provide patentable utility. Applicant therefore requests that the rejection of claims 1-33 under 35 U.S.C. 101 be withdrawn.

102 Rejections

The Examiner rejected claims 1-33 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Slaunwhite et al. (U.S. Patent Pub. No. US20030090471) (“Slaunwhite”). Applicant has amended the claims to clarify the invention.

Claim 1 recites a method for providing a hot key corresponding to a particular function in a computer system, the particular function provided for a context of an application program, a user providing input within the context. A user can access the hot key configuring function from within a context and without leaving the context. The hot key is mapped to the particular function without the user leaving the context and in response to the user utilizing the hot key configuring function in the context.

Slaunwhite discloses a shortcut key manager which assigns a hot key to a non-command user interface item type using a separate menu in a dialog. When a non-command item type hot key is selected, a window is displayed and keyboard focus is set on the window.

When assigning a hot key to a function of the computer system, Slaunwhite only discloses

that an assignment handler links the shortcut key with the item type, and “typically it is done in a customization dialog where the user selects the item type from a list of available item types and then keys in the shortcut key that is associated with it” (para. [0037], emphasis added). Thus Slaunwhite is disclosing the standard way of assigning hotkeys, where a separate menu or list is displayed and the user selects the function in the list to assign a hot key, which takes the user out of the application context in which he was providing input.

Applicant’s claim 1, in contrast, recites that the hot key configuring function and the mapping of hot key to function is performed without leaving the context of the application program in which he was providing input. It is well-known to those of ordinary skill in the field of GUIs and application programs that a context of an application program is a mode or window of the program that receives input, and switching to a second context means switching focus or control to a different dialog box, menu, program, window, mode, etc. which exits the first context so that the second context will receive input separately from the first context. For example, as explained in the specification on page 5, a user can be in a document (text entry) context of a word processing application in which text is input in a document. A different context is a “print” context, which allows the user to select a printer to print the document. If in the print context, the user is no longer in the document context.

Applicant’s invention thus provides the advantage of mapping a hot key to a particular function without the user having to leave the context in which he is providing input, which allows the user to, for example, continuously work in the same context without interruption. Slaunwhite does not disclose or suggest any such ability, and Applicant therefore believes that claim 1 is patentable over Slaunwhite.

Claims 2-8 and 10 are dependent on claim 1 and are patentable over Slaunwhite for at

least the same reasons as claim 1, and for additional reasons. For example, claim 7 recites receiving a selection of a particular function includes receiving input from the user indicating an item displayed in the context, the item causing the particular function to be accessed when the item is selected; this is not disclosed or suggested by Slaunwhite, who only discloses selecting an item type from a list not in the context, nor is Slaunwhite's item type a displayed item that causes the particular function to be accessed when that item is selected. Claim 8 recites assigning a portion of the text of the item as a portion of the hot key, which is not disclosed or suggested by Slaunwhite (Slaunwhite's page 3, paragraph [40], cited by the Examiner, is only directed to performing a function when the corresponding hot key is pressed by the user, and has nothing to do with the task of assigning or mapping a function to a hot key.) Claim 10 recites that the mapping step includes receiving an indication of the function for mapping when the user hovers the pointing device over a displayed feature in the context for a predetermined amount of time, which is nowhere disclosed or suggested by Slaunwhite (e.g., the list in paragraph [37] of Slaunwhite is not in the context).

Claim 12 recites a computer-readable storage medium including features similar to those of claim 1 including access to a hot key configuring function without leaving the context in which the user was providing input, and mapping the hot key to the particular function without the user leaving the context. Claim 12 is thus patentable over Slaunwhite for at least similar reasons as claim 1. Claims 13-18 and 21 are dependent on claim 12 and are patentable over Slaunwhite for at least the same reasons as claim 12, and for additional reasons similar to those explained above for claims 2-8 and 10.

Claim 23 recites a computer system including a hot key configuring function integrated into a GUI such that a user can access the hot key configuring function from within a context in

which a user is providing input and without leaving the context, the configuring function utilized by the user to designate a mapping of the hot key to the particular function and store the mapping without the user leaving the context. Claim 23 is thus patentable over Slaunwhite for at least similar reasons as claim 1. Claims 24-27, 29-30, and 32 are dependent on claim 23 and are patentable over Slaunwhite for at least the same reasons as claim 23, and for additional reasons similar to those explained above for claims 2-8 and 10.

In view of the remarks above, Applicant submits that claims 1-33 are patentable over Slaunwhite, and respectfully requests that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) be withdrawn.

New Claims

New claims 34-45 have been added by this amendment. Claims 34, 38, and 42 recite a mapping of the hot key to the particular function without the user providing input to a menu separate from the context, which is not disclosed or suggested by Slaunwhite (Slaunwhite provides a separate list dialog to indicate hot key assignments, para. [37]). Claims 35, 39, and 43 similarly recite that the user selects the particular function without providing input to a menu separate from the context. Claims 36, 37, 40, 41, 43, and 44 recite ways of indicating an item displayed in a context, which are not disclosed or suggested by Slaunwhite.

Applicants' attorney believes this application in condition for allowance. Should any unresolved issues remain, Examiner is invited to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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